

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY USSR (Magadan Oblast and Mordovskaya ASSR) REPORT

SUBJECT 1. Omsukchan Labor Camps and Area DATE DISTR. 29 December 1958
 Castillite Industry (Manpower and description of the castillite mine / Roman
 2. Labor Camps in the Potma Area NO. PAGES 2 That castillite is a source of atomic

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

DATE OF INFO. REFERENCES 50X1-HUM

PLACE & DATE ACQ. 50X1-HUM

SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

Two reports concerning labor camps in the USSR

Attachment 1 is a fairly generalized report dealing with the Omsukchan camp and the nearby castillite mines. An elementary memory sketch of the area is included.

Attachment 2 is a very short report dealing with three camps in the Potma complex of labor camps. The report contains very little detail and is concerned primarily with the locations of the camps and nearby industry.

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LABOR CAMPS IN THE POTMA

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1. [redacted]
 Labor Camp No. 14, in Stantsiya Potma (N 54-06, E 42-53), Mordovskaya ASSR. There were three towns in this area with the name Potma: Stantsiya Potma, Staraya Potma (N 54-02, E 42-53) and Novaya Potma (N 54-02, E 43-00). (See Map AMS NN 38-4, Series N 501, Temnikov [redacted] the combined population of these three towns [redacted] between 25,000 and 30,000 persons, the majority of whom were prison camp laborers. The forced laborers in this area were either assigned to kolkhozy, lumber camps, or to a military uniform factory.

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Forced Labor Camp No. 1

2. Forced Labor Camp No. 1 was located approximately 45 kilometers north of Stantsiya Potma, near the town of Umor (N 54-30, E 42-48), on the railroad leading north from Stantsiya Potma. Here approximately 8,000 internees worked in lumber camps in the area.

Forced Labor Camp No. 14

3. Approximately 4,500 forced laborers were interned in Forced Labor Camp No. 14 which was located in the town of Stantsiya Potma. [redacted]

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Forced Labor Camp No. 6

4. Approximately 3,500 male forced laborers and 9,000 female forced laborers were interned at Forced Labor Camp No. 6 which was located near Molochnaya Stantsiya (coordinates unavailable), between the towns of Staraya Potma and Novaya Potma. Most of these laborers were employed at a military uniform factory in Staraya Potma where uniforms were produced for Soviet Army personnel from the rank of private to senior lieutenant. The material used in manufacturing these uniforms came from mills located in Ivanovo (N 57-00, E 40-59). [redacted]

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[redacted] The remainder of forced laborers who were not employed at the uniform factory were sent to work at surrounding kolkhozy.

Labor Conditions

5. [redacted] all prisoners were guarded by MVD personnel while being transported to and from work, at the place of work, and within the labor camp compound. [redacted] between 40 and 50 MVD guards performed roll call twice a day at Forced Labor Camp No. 14. When a prisoner did not answer the roll, the entire group of prisoners was forced to remain standing in place until the missing person was accounted for. In order to complete the morning roll call before breakfast, the guards began the attendance check at 0500 hours. Working hours at the lumber camps and at the kolkhozy were from 0700 until 1900 hours, seven days a week. [redacted]

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Omsukchan Labor Camp and Area Castillite IndustryOmsukchan Labor Camp

1. The Omsukchan Labor Camp for non-political prisoners was located 20 km north of the village of Omsukchan (N60-05 E150-54). (See [redacted] sketch of the area on page 4.) [redacted] this camp was not known by any other name or numerical designation. It was located in a valley surrounded by mountains and extended over an area measuring 1 x 0.500 km. The camp had a population of 2,000 plus about 150 male guards. 50X1-HUM
2. The buildings in the camp were one-story wooden huts [redacted]. There were no restricted areas. [redacted] no water deposits or dams. Horses, laden with casks of water from a nearby spring kept the camp supplied. Electricity was supplied by generators located outside the camp; [redacted] 50X1-HUM
3. The labor camp was adequately supplied with the necessary staples but [redacted]. There was no agriculture in the area; the natives lived mainly from hunting and fishing. 50X1-HUM
4. The camp had a clinic with 40 or 50 beds. A disease called tsynga in which a person lost all his teeth, was prevalent in this area during the months of June, July, and August. The symptoms were black spots on the legs. This disease was combated with intravenous injections twice a week during one month. Besides this the patients would drink a tea brewed from the leaves of the dwarf pines.
5. The labor camp had a lending library with all types of books. It also had a movie which showed pictures on Sundays. No political meetings were held at the camp.
6. The internees of the camp worked in castillite mines, the local castillite processing plant, and in the neighboring coal mine.

Coal Mine

7. Southeast of the labor camp was a small coal mine which employed approximately 300 prisoners. It supplied coal to the labor camp, the castillite processing plant, and the village of Omsukchan.

Castillite Mines and Processing Plant

8. These mines were located approximately 800 meters northwest of the labor camp and employed about 1,000 men who were engaged in mining a brown ore. This ore contained a navy blue mineral called castillite (Kastelit) which shone in the sun and was rumored to be a source of atomic energy.
9. These mines also contained a small amount of gold.
10. There were five mine levels, one above the other, which were connected internally.
11. An engineer supervised the work on each level and located the mineral with a detector. He would then point out the place where the drills or compressed air hammers were to be used.
12. The mine workers wore overalls and dust masks. They worked in two shifts; the work norm for each shift was 120 750-kg cars of brown ore, but the normal yield was 150 cars. They used regular mining machinery, mainly employing compressed air hammers and drills. The prisoners were paid good salaries, some miners earning as much as 12,000 rubles a month. [redacted] a Decauville operator earned 3,000 rubles a month. In addition to his salary, each worker was paid 8 rubles for every gram of navy blue mineral he found. 50X1-HUM
13. The ore extracted in the upper levels was sent to the bottom level to be loaded in cars and shipped outside the mine where the brown ore was separated and sent to the processing plant. 50X1-HUM

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14. The processing plant was located about two km southeast of the labor camp; it employed from 600 to 700 prisoners. In this plant the ore was crushed, washed, and the navy blue mineral extracted.
15. The castillite was then packed in small bags and sent probably to Magadan in a small bi-plane which landed in a flat area next to the plant. [redacted] 50X1-HUM
16. The village of Omsukchan consisted of approximately 50 houses [redacted] no airfield in the area. [redacted] vegetation was poor because the climate was cold and the ground covered with ice throughout the year. The warmer months of the midnight sun were from June through August when it rained and snowed with temperatures varying from 15 to -5 degrees centigrade. Winter lasted from September through May, during which time there was much snow and ice with strong winds and frequent blizzards. During December, January, and February daylight lasted from 1030 to 1430 hours and temperatures varied from -65 to -15 degrees, with an average temperature of -45 degrees.
17. The Omsukchan-Susuman highway was under construction [redacted] 50X1-HUM
- [redacted] Connecting with this highway via small roads were the Omsukchan Labor Camp, the coal mine, the castillite mines, and the castillite processing plant.

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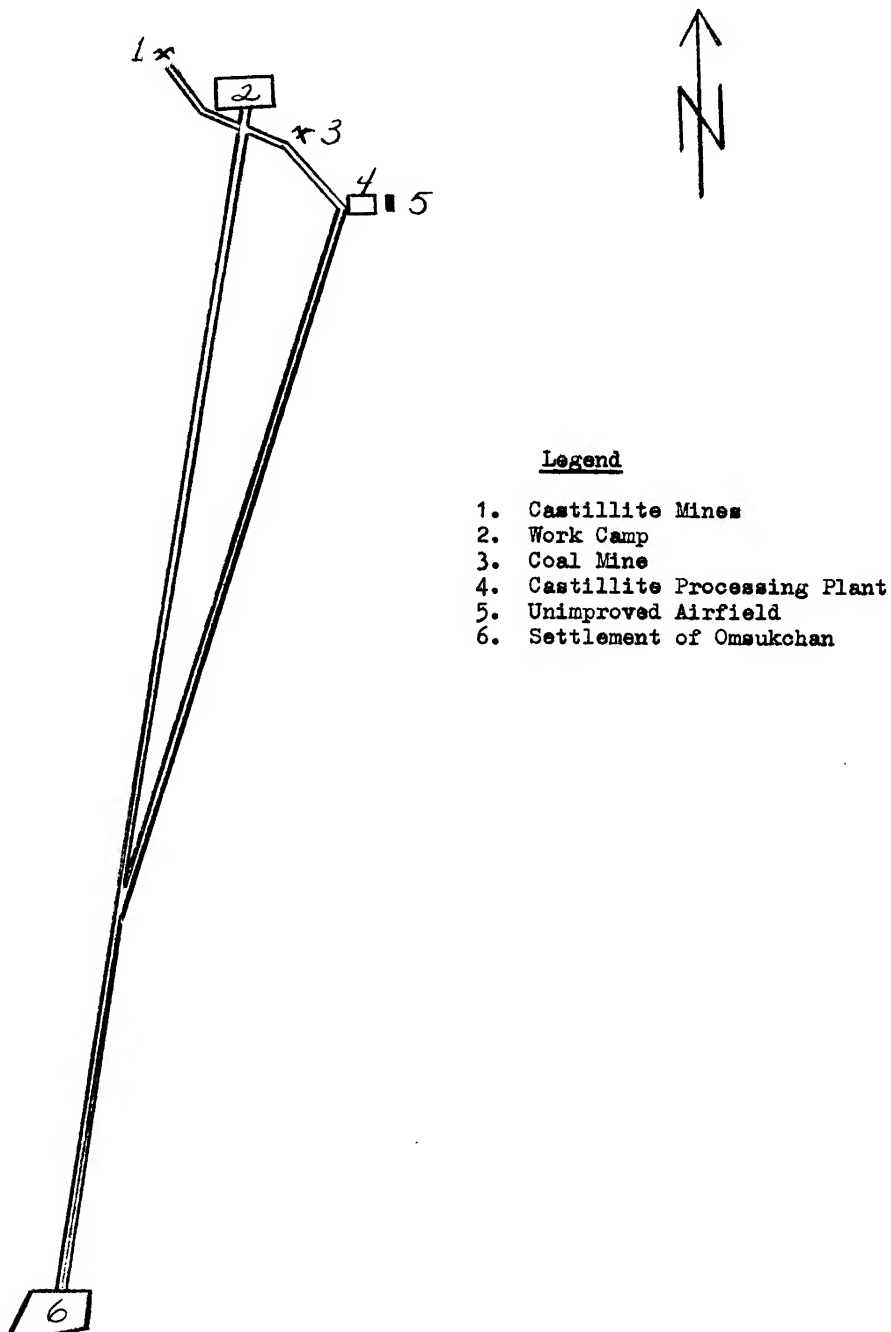
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Sketch of the Omsukchan Area

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